

43rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT • ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS CHAIR

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Jorgensen Marks SeniorCare's 13th Anniversary by Calling on Feds for Three-Year Extension

MADISON – Assembly Democratic Caucus Chair and State Representative Andy Jorgensen (D-Milton) today marked the occasion of SeniorCare's 13th anniversary by calling on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell to grant an extension of the program, ensuring it can run through December 31st, 2018. SeniorCare's current waiver is only valid through the end of this year. Jorgensen's waiver extension request comes on the heels of Democrats' second successful petition drive to maintain SeniorCare in the state budget.

"Time and time again, Wisconsinites have raised their voices in support of SeniorCare, when Republicans have threatened it," said Jorgensen. "It's incredible to me that anyone could deny the value of this program because, clearly, SeniorCare saves lives and SeniorCare saves money. It's my hope that we never again have to fight partisan battles over a program that just makes sense."

SeniorCare currently provides life-saving prescription drugs to nearly 90,000 Wisconsin residents aged 65 or older. SeniorCare has a simple enrollment process, a \$30 annual enrollment fee, income-based deductibles and co-payments of just \$5 for generic medications. Most participants save hundreds of dollars each year by utilizing SeniorCare's prescription drug benefits instead of Medicare Part D.

Through SeniorCare, the State of Wisconsin is also able to save taxpayers' money, because, unlike the federal government, it can negotiate the lowest prices for prescription drugs. Our bargaining process has been so effective that in 2009, the average cost to support a SeniorCare enrollee was \$588 a year, less than half the \$1,690 cost to subsidize a Part D participant.

"For 13 years now, SeniorCare has served Wisconsin well – and I'll continue to do all I can to see this benefit preserved for years into the future," said Jorgensen. "No one should have to choose between food or shelter and life-saving medications, and SeniorCare helps older Wisconsinites meet all those basic needs. SeniorCare is a win-win for Wisconsin."

To learn more about SeniorCare – or to sign up, visit <u>www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/seniorcare</u> or call Rep. Jorgensen's Capitol office at (888) 534-0043.

ANDY JORGENSEN

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